

**Call for Papers**  
**International Conference on:**  
**The Concept of Mixed Migration: Reflecting on Today's Migratory**  
**Policies, Movements and Paradigms Shifts**  
**Geneva, 8-9 April 2010**

A conference jointly organized by the Programme for the Study of Global Migration (Graduate Institute, Geneva) and the Institut d'Ethnologie (Université de Neuchâtel/MAPS), with the support of the Division for International Protection Services of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

**Background**

In today's world of high mobility, managing migratory movements, especially those which take place irregularly, has become a priority for governments. Since the late 1980s in particular, the intensification and diversification of migration dynamics together with a decrease in economic growth have led to a stigmatization of poor and undocumented immigrants while generating increasingly restrictive migration and asylum policies. Besides, the threat of international terrorism has led to a 'securitization' and a further politicization of migration policies. In an effort to better control their borders, States are now faced with the increasing challenge of distinguishing between various categories of migrants as defined by international and national laws. Differentiating between 'refugees' and 'economic migrants', especially, has become extremely difficult given that human mobility often responds to political, economic, social and cultural concerns and is complex in nature.

Today, this difficulty contributes to governments' tendency to consider all persons with irregular status as a potential danger to their political and economic stability without always respecting their international obligations in terms of *non-refoulement* and basic human rights protection. International organizations and NGOs involved with migration and asylum issues are very concerned with this evolution. They have developed new terminology to describe it, as well as policy-statements and initiatives to address it. If the notion of an 'asylum-migration' nexus first emerged in the late 1990s, humanitarian actors are now increasingly referring to the more general concept of 'mixed migration'.<sup>1</sup> For the United Nations Refugee Agency, this term refers to migratory movements – usually irregular ones – of people taking the same routes and same means of transport but travelling for 'different reasons' and having 'different protection needs'.<sup>2</sup>

Academic research has not yet kept up with these developments. Despite recent endeavours, the term 'mixed migration' has not yet been properly reflected: what is the historical and institutional context in which this notion has recently emerged? What are its various definitions and evolving meanings, both at the global and local level? Similarly, little research has been done on the various initiatives, plans and projects which are now being implemented in different parts of the world to reconcile

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<sup>1</sup> Jeff Crisp, "Beyond the nexus; UNHCR's evolving perspective on refugee protection and international migration", *New Issues in Refugee Research*, Working Paper n°155, UNHCR, Geneva, 2008.

<sup>2</sup> UNHCR, Asylum & Migration, <http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/asylum?page=home> – last consulted in September 2008.

migration management with protection of basic human rights, including refugee rights. Here again, many questions remain to be discussed: which institutions are taking the lead at the global and local levels? What are their activities and how are they perceived by local stakeholders? From a legal perspective, debates still need to be held on whether and which instruments are needed to ensure proper refugee and human rights protection in the current context.<sup>3</sup> Lastly, further research needs to be conducted on today's migratory movements in different parts of the world: what are the various and interrelated causes for departure and the conditions of movements of people on the move? How do recent migration and asylum policies affect conditions of movement, while offering new possibilities to mobilize various legal categories?

It is the aim of this international research conference to help filling these knowledge gaps. The general objectives of the conference will be to:

- 1) Review the origins and the definition of the concept of mixed migration as well as its political, institutional and legal implications;
- 2) Clarify the meaning and analyze the interpretations of some key terminology and new categories of victims often used along with the discourse on mixed migration;
- 3) Analyze on the basis of case studies new migration and asylum policies and practices which are developed around the concept of mixed migration, and their impact on migration dynamics;

### **Call for Papers**

This call for papers relates specifically to a series of 4 working panels which will aim to examine selected case studies linked to the Phenomenon of Mixed Migration (sessions 2 and 3 of the provisional agenda). These case studies shall relate to one of the following four regions of the world: West and North Africa; the horn of Africa & Middle-East; Central America; South-East Asia.

The submissions of the selected candidates are expected to highlight the different issues raised by mixed flows of migrants in a given region. Contributors will explore the complexification of migration dynamics and to look at the consequences of recent migration and asylum policies on conditions of movements, and highlight both the constraints and coping strategies they entail. When feasible, the panels will also discuss past experiences and historical responses to 'mixed migration movements' and compare them with present situations. Reflections on recent initiatives related to this phenomenon and on local understandings of the concept as well as on the challenges ahead are welcomed.

The conference organizers welcome contributions and presentations from academics and researchers. Junior researchers (doctoral and post-doctoral students) are particularly encouraged to respond to the call for papers. The presentations at the conference can be any of the following formats: 1) individual paper presentations of applied research or documented experiences and 2) presentations on research findings

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<sup>3</sup> On this issue, see: Vincent Chetail (ed.), *Mondialisation, migration et droits de l'homme: le droit international en question / Globalization, Migration and Human Rights: International Law under Review*, Bruxelles: Bruylant, 2007.

or successful experiences and 3) post-graduate feedback sessions on ongoing research projects.

The conference is based on a multidisciplinary approach, involving historical, anthropological, and legal researchers and experts, as well as stakeholders from relevant international institutions and non-governmental organizations.

They should 1) have a solid methodological approach, 2) have a strong evidence base and 3) discuss implications for inclusive public policies that advance migrants' rights and reduce their vulnerability to the multidimensional challenges of mixed migration.

Selected papers, presentations and research projects will address mixed migration in the following regions: 1) West and North Africa, 2) Horn of Africa and the Middle East, 3) Central America and 4) South-East Asia. Papers and presentations submitted should focus either on these regions specifically or should discuss relevant applied research and experiences reporting on policy proposals that could possibly be transposed to these regions.

Please refer to the proposed agenda for more information on the sequence of the presentations.

### **Financial Assistance**

There is no conference registration fee. Grants covering transportation costs, hotel accommodation and daily meals will be provided to scholars and researchers who have been selected to present their papers/projects.

### **Contact information**

For more information on the conference, please contact:

Dr. Jérôme Elie, Coordinator of Activities

Programme for the Study of Global Migration

Email: [jerome.elie@graduateinstitute.ch](mailto:jerome.elie@graduateinstitute.ch)

Please, send an email indicating your willingness to participate in the conference to [jerome.elie@graduateinstitute.ch](mailto:jerome.elie@graduateinstitute.ch) no later than **January 4, 2010**, together with an abstract of approximately 500 words in PDF or RTF format and a short CV.

## **Provisional Conference Agenda:**

### **DAY 1:**

#### **Session 1: 09.00-12.00: The Notion of Mixed Migration**

This session will explore the historical and institutional context in which the notion of ‘mixed migration’ has recently emerged, its various definitions and the global and local interpretations it encompasses. It will look at the conflicting meanings of this notion, and explore their reasons.

#### **Session 2: 13.30-15.30: The Phenomenon of Mixed Migration: Case Studies (working panels)**

Four panels will examine selected case studies from different regions. Junior researchers (doctoral and post-doctoral students), specializing in the relevant regions and who have been selected through the call for contributions will explore the complexification of migration dynamics which are increasingly diversified, circular, volatile and involve a wide variety of interrelated factors (social, economical, political, institutional). Researchers will also look at the consequences of recent migration and asylum policies on conditions of movements, and highlight both the constraints (in terms of protection and human rights challenges) and coping strategies (in terms of mobilization of various legal categories for instance) they entail. When feasible, the panels will also discuss past experiences and historical responses to ‘mixed migration movements’ (e.g. the boat people phenomenon) and compare them with present situations.

Four regions of the world will be discussed, two in parallel: West and North Africa; the horn of Africa & Middle-East (first session); Central America; South-East Asia (second session). Each session will be introduced by a key-speaker who will also chair the panel:

- West and North Africa:
- Horn of Africa and Middle East

#### **Session 3:16.00-18.00: The Phenomenon of Mixed Migration: Past and Present Case Studies Continued**

- South-East Asia
- Latin and Central America

### **DAY 2:**

#### **Session 4: 09.00-12.00: Impact of Migration Policies**

The past decade has witnessed a sharp increase of policies developed to address the specific challenges raised by mixed migration and new migration patterns. This session will reflect on these initiatives, explore their relevance as well as their concrete results and impact on migration dynamics and on human rights and refugee protection.

#### **Session 5: 13.30-18.00: Concluding Remarks and Recommendations**

During this last session, the rapporteurs of each panel will provide a summary of the discussions in their panel and highlight the major protection and policy challenges identified by participants. A keynote speaker will then propose a synthesis of the main scientific and policy issues identified during the conference. The conference organizers will each comment from their perspective on these recommendations.